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EXAMINER

BOECKMANN, JASON J

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9-17, 43 and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schilling (DE 3517122) in view of Rookard, Jr. (4,272,768).

Schilling shows a spray gun comprising: a spray mechanism (1), and a reservoir containing a substance for spraying, the reservoir is arranged to be removably mounted to the device, the reservoir comprising; a substance outlet passage (11, 7), a closure member (6) to close the passage when the reservoir is not mounted on the device. The closure member opens in response to the reservoir being mounted on the device (4), wherein the substance comprises a cosmetic or a care product (paint is both a cosmetic and a care product). Schilling does not specifically disclose that the reservoir comprises a first partition, first and second compartments capable of containing the substance, the compartments being arranged to feed the spray mechanism with the substance and being disposed on either side of the first partition,

However, Rookard, Jr. shows a reservoir comprising a first partition (6) defining first and second compartments (the right and left compartments shown in figure 1).

Therefore, It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to add the partition of Rookard, Jr.'s reservoir to the reservoir of Schilling in order to prevent uncontrollable sloshing which results in a stable reservoir even when partially full as taught by Rookard, Jr.(column 2, lines 39-41).

Regarding claims 2, 5 and 6, the partitions of Rookard, Jr. that are being added to Schilling's reservoir include a second partition (on the right side of figure 1) on one side of the first partition that defines two sub-compartments (top and bottom) that are in communication with each other, a third partition (on the left side of figure 1) located on the other side of the first partition defining two sub-compartments (top and bottom), the first partition being between the second and third partitions (figure 1).

Regarding claim 7, the reservoir of Shilling includes a base portion (30) and a lid-forming portion (19) fitted on the base portion (figure 1).

Regarding claims 9-11, the substance outlet passage (7, 11) is defined at least by an end piece (7) which projects from the reservoir (figure 1), the end piece including a sealing O-ring (12).

Regarding claim 13, the device of Shilling includes a fastener (5) arranged to cooperate by complementary shapes with the spray mechanism (1).

Regarding claim 12, Schilling as modified by Rookard, Jr. shows all aspects of the applicant's invention as in the rejection of claim 1 above, but does not specifically disclose that the reservoir is partially transparent. However, transparent reservoirs are common in the art. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the

art at the time of the applicant's invention to make a portion of the reservoir transparent in order to see how much substance is left in the reservoir.

Regarding claim 14, the substance is sprayed in response to a suction created by a vector gas (inherently part of the spray gun in figure 1).

Regarding claim 16, the spray mechanism includes a control member to control the vector gas and the substance to be sprayed (figure 1).

Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schilling (DE 3517122) in view of Rookard, Jr. (4,272,768) further in view of Coffee (4,306,685).

Schilling as modified by Rookard, Jr. shows all aspects of the applicant's invention as in the rejection of claim 1 above, but does not specifically disclose that the check valve is a ball check valve. However, Coffee shows a ball check valve (42) for a pressurized container. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to substitute the ball check valve of Coffee for the check valve of Schilling as modified by Rookard, Jr. in order to create a more uniform seal when the valve is closed.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schilling (DE 3517122), in view of Krautzberger (1,603,612).

Schilling shows a spray device comprising a spray mechanism (1) including a housing and a reservoir (3) containing a substance to be sprayed capable of being

releasably mounted to the device so that the substance can be selectively dispensed from the spray mechanism, the reservoir comprising a closure member (6) to close the passage when the reservoir is not mounted on the device, wherein, the closure member opens in response to the reservoir being mounted on the device (4), but does not specifically disclose that the housing has a vector gas supply.

However, Krautzberger shows a paint spray gun that includes a reservoir and housing for receiving a vector gas supply. The vector gas supply enters the device through element 6b and is used to propel the substance being sprayed.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to connect a vector gas supply to the housing of the device of Schilling, in order to propel the substance being sprayed for the reservoir to the article to be sprayed.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krautzberger (1,603,612), in view of Schilling (DE 3517122).

Krautzberger shows a spray device comprising a spray mechanism (8) including a housing for receiving a vector gas supply (6b) and a reservoir (3) containing a substance to be sprayed capable of being releasably mounted to the device so that the substance can be selectively dispensed from the spray mechanism, but does not specifically disclose that the reservoir comprises a closure member to close the passage when the reservoir is not mounted on the device, wherein, the closure member opens in response to the reservoir being mounted on the device.

However, Schilling shows a spray device with a reservoir that includes a closure member (6) to close the passage when the reservoir is not mounted on the device, wherein, the closure member opens in response to the reservoir being mounted on the device (4).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention add the closure member (6) of the reservoir of Schilling, to the reservoir of Krautzberger, in order to have the reservoir automatically seal when it is removed from the device to prevent leakage of the substance being sprayed.

Claims 21-34, 36-38, 40-42 45 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krautzberger (1,603,612), in view of Bara (US 2003/0108487)

Krautzberger shows a spray device for spraying at least one substance contained in a reservoir (3), the substance being taken from the reservoir by suction created at an outlet orifice of the reservoir by a stream of vector gas coming from inlet 6b (lines 20-25), the device comprising an adjustment valve (5) for adjusting a flow rate of the sprayed substance and a control member (15) capable of being operated by a user to act both on a vector gas dispenser valve (20) and the adjustment valve (5), the adjustment valve comprising a plunger (5) arranged to co-operate with an associated seat (figure 1) so that the flow rate of the sprayed substance varies with the spacing between the seat and the plunger, the substance comprising a cosmetic or a care product (paint is both a cosmetic and a care product), but does not specifically disclose that the vector gas is stored in a pressurized receptacle.

However, Bara shows a device for spraying a product that includes a supply of vector gas that is contained in a receptacle (101), and used to draw a fluid from a second container by creating a vacuum just as in the device of Krautzberger.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to use the pressurized receptacle (101) of Bara's invention to carry the vector gas (or compressed air) of the device of Krautzberger, and have it be connected to the device at the air inlet 6b. This modification would allow the spray device to be portable and independent of an outside vector gas supply.

Regarding claims 22-24, the control member is a pivoting lever (figure 1) and the dispenser valve is secured to the pressurized receptacle and is triggered by tilting a control rod.

Regarding claims 25-27, the seat is situated on a support piece (8) for supporting the nozzle, and the support piece is releasably fastened to the device (figure 1).

Regarding claims 28 and 33, the reservoir is removable (figure 1) and the plunger is slidable in a direction parallel to the direction along which the substance is sprayed (figure 1).

Regarding claims 29-32, the device of Krautzberger, as modified by Bara above, shows all aspects of the applicant's invention as in the rejection of claim 21 above, but does not specifically disclose that the device comprises two outlet nozzles for the vector gas and an outlet for the substance, with the two vector gas outlet nozzles converging in

a direction going away from the device and the substance outlet orifice comprises an axis substantially in a same plane as the vector gas outlet nozzles.

However, Bara shows a spraying device comprising two outlet nozzles for the vector gas (7) and an outlet for the substance (6), with the two vector gas outlet nozzles converging in a direction going away from the device and the substance outlet orifice comprises an axis substantially in a same plane as the vector gas outlet nozzles (figures 1-4).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to substitute the two vector gas nozzles (7) and the substance outlet (6) of Bara's spraying device for the nozzle configuration of the device of Krautzberger, as modified by Bara above, in order to suck the substance into the flow of the vector gas more efficiently due to having two nozzles of vector gas orientated towards each other, as well as to atomize the substance being sprayed.

Regarding claim 34, the device includes a housing (6b) for receiving the pressurized container as shown in figure 1.

Regarding claims 36 and 37, the device does not include a return spring for the plunger. However, it is well known in the art to use a return spring to return a valve needle back to a valve seat. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to add a return spring to the device in order to return the plunger back to its seat automatically.

Regarding claim 38, the device includes an end piece, (the linkage in the handle of the device in figure 1) arranged to be engaged on a control rod of the dispenser

valve, wherein the control member is arranged to be capable of pressing against the end piece.

Regarding claims 40 and 41, the device is generally elongate in shape and the control member comprises a presser face on a longitudinal side of the device and the pressurized container and the reservoir are held together in a fixed manner (via the device housing).

Regarding claim 42, the device of Krautzberger, as modified by Bara above includes a micro-orifice opening to the ambient air when the reservoir is empty and the valve is slightly open.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8, 18, 19, 35 and 39 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 5/9/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that Rookard is nonanalogous art, it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the applicant

was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, both the applicant's invention and Rookard's invention deal with reservoirs that contain multiple partitions that affect the flow of the fluid inside the reservoirs. Therefore, Rookard is being considered analogous art.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references of Schilling and Rookard as applied to claim 1, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, Rookard teaches partitions inside a reservoir to prevent uncontrollable sloshing, which is the motivation used in the 103 rejection of Schilling in view of Rookard above, to add the partitions to the reservoir of Schilling.

Regarding applicants remarks towards claim 20, applicant argues that Krautzberger does not disclose a housing for receiving a vector gas supply. The examiner respectfully disagrees. First off, it is noted that the tem "for receiving" is being considered a functional limitation and does not require an actual vector gas supply to be present in the housing. It is noted that the housing of Krautzberger is fully capable of receiving a vector gas supply and therefore meets the limitation of "for receiving a vector gas supply," of claim 20. A second interpretation of Krautzberger by the examiner

is that the pipe 6b, that is part of the housing of Krautzberger, connects to a source of compressed air, the source of compressed air being the vector gas supply. Therefore, the housing of Krautzberger receives a vector gas supply when it is connected to the source of compressed air. Depending on the type of compressed air supply that is used in conjunction with Krautzberger, the device of could very well be portable and cordless.

Regarding the applicant's arguments that paint is not a cosmetic or a care product, it is noted that by interpretation the claim language in view of the applicant's specification [0067] that the examiner agrees that paint cannot be considered a care product. However, the examiner is considering paint to be a cosmetic. American Heritage Dictionary defines cosmetic as: Something superficial that is used to cover a deficiency or defect. The examiner is considering the paint from the device of Schilling and Krautzberger to be a cosmetic due to the fact that paint is used to cover a deficiency or defect.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jason J. Boeckmann whose telephone number is (571)272-2708. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00- 5:00, Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Len Tran can be reached on (571) 272-1184. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/J. J. B./
Examiner, Art Unit 3752
8/14/2008

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Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3752